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ABSTRACT

The role of the women's rights press in reporting on and advancing coeducation in the United States is considered. The women's rights press was linked to the women's rights movement and articulated the goal that women should enjoy full participation in all aspects of U.S. life, including higher education. This analysis is based on 12 of the most prominent of the women's rights papers published between 1849 and 1920 and representing the major U.S. geographical areas. Using descriptive content analysis, attention is directed to how the editors, correspondents, and readers reacted to the advances and setbacks of coeducation. Topics include: how and why women's rights papers from different geographic regions varied in their perceptions of coeducation's success; reasons for the antipathy of women's rights activists toward colleges for women only; women's response to the causes and effects of the "fear of feminization" which swept through coeducational colleges in the early 1890s; and insights into why public opinion on coeducation shifted over the 71 years covered in the analysis. Analysis of how coeducation was reported in the women's rights press shows the vital link between women's education and their social equality. (Author/SW)

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Coeducation and the Women's Rights Press, 1849 - 1920

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ABSTRACT

A full account of coeducation in American institutions of higher education remains to be written. At the present, it must be pieced together from a variety of sources, including histories of higher education, accounts of individual colleges and universities, and journal articles. While the saga of coeducation should be reported from a number of stances - student, faculty, administrators, opponents, and supporters - this paper presents the story of coeducation from the perspective of the women's rights press.

From 1849 to 1920, a special type of periodical, designed to serve the needs of a special type of audience, was published in the United States. Known jointly as the women's rights press, these titles were products of the burgeoning women's rights movement and articulated the goal that women should enjoy full participation in all aspects of American life, including higher education. Through the amount and tone of their material on women's higher education, the papers illustrated that the women's rights movement had a broader social agenda than simply the attainment of woman suffrage. Amidst the steady flow of material on women's efforts to attain higher education, a dominant theme evident in the women's rights press was that of coeducation.

Coeducation in colleges and universities was an integral element in the campaign for women's social and political equality. Women's rights papers transmitted the radical message that if men and women were educated together, the chasm between the two spheres would diminish, if not disappear. This examination of the women's rights press and its views on coeducation reveals how women perceived, influenced, and reacted as the movement swelled from a a single Ohio institution with four women students to over 354 colleges and universities enrolling over 96,000 women students in 1920.

Twelve of the most prominent of the women's rights papers published between 1849 and 1920 and representing the major geographical areas of the county form the primary source material for this study: Agitator 1869; Lily 1849 - 1856; New Northwest

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1871 - 1887; Pioneer 1869 - 1873; Queen Bee 1882 - 1895; Revolution 1868 - 1870; Sibyl 1856 - 1864; Una 1853 - 1855; Woman's Advocate 1855 - 1856?; Woman's Chronicle 1888 - 1893; Woman's Journal/Woman's Citizen 1870 - 1920; and Woman's Tribune 1883 - 1909. Using descriptive content analysis, this study shows how the editors, correspondents, and readers reacted to the advances and setbacks of coeducation.

The story the papers told is far from a plodding account of steady, unchallenged growth. Coeducation evoked a myriad of concerns about the physical and mental capacities of women students, as well as heated debates over the future spheres of the two equally educated sexes. All of the papers advocated coeducation. However, the personal philosophies of the women editors about the proper role for women educated women often colored the journalistic output and showed that the women's movement did not always express a monolithic view on the issue. Through their far-flung network of correspondents, including women students in coeducational colleges, women's rights papers presented a rich and provocative picture of how the women's movement viewed, promoted, and defended coeducation. Among the topics to be discussed are: how and why women's rights papers from different geographic regions varied in their perceptions of coeducation's success; reasons for the antipathy of women's rights activists toward colleges for women only; women's response to the causes and effects of the "fear of feminization" which swept through coeducational colleges in the early 1890s; and insights into why public opinion on coeducation shifted over the seventy-one years covered in this study.

Although the ideal of coeducation envisioned by the women's rights press was never realized, the papers, written for women, by women, chronicled an important chapter in the history of women's higher education. The papers not only reported women's educational advances, but also helped them to happen. Both social historians and historians of education have overlooked the importance of the women's rights press. The papers are rich primary source material from a remarkable social movement. This analysis of how coeducation was reported in the women's rights press dramatically illustrates the vital link between women's education and their social equality. It illuminates an important chapter in higher educational history from women's point of view.

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The full story of coeducation in American institutions of higher education remains to be written. At the present it must be pieced together from a variety of sources, chapters in histories of higher education to fleeting references in accounts of individual colleges and universities.[1] To be truly comprehensive, the chronicle of educating the sexes together must be related by a number of voices - student, faculty, administrators, opponents, and supporters. One of the most outspoken, but least known, champion of coeducation was the women's rights press. This paper presents an account of coeducation from their unique perspective.

From 1849 to 1920, a special type of periodical, designed to serve the needs of a distinct audience, was published in the United States. Known collectively as the women's rights press, these periodicals were products of the burgeoning women's rights movement. They articulated the goal that women should enjoy full participation in all aspects of American life, including higher education. Through their extensive coverage of women's struggle to achieve higher education, these papers illustrated that the women's rights movement had a broader social agenda than simply the attainment of woman suffrage. Amidst their steady flow of columns detailing

women's efforts to attain higher education, coeducation was an especially prominent theme.

From the beginning coeducation was an integral element in women's campaign for social and political equality. Women's rights papers transmitted the radical message that if men and women were educated together, the chasm between the two spheres would diminish, if not disappear. The women's rights periodicals examined in this study were ardent supporters of coeducation.* Their outpouring of articles, columns, and editorials provide unique insights into women's efforts to be educated equally alongside their brothers.

Prior to the Civil War coeducation appeared mainly in midwestern institutions of higher education. Despite its limited geographical impact, the editors of the four earliest women's rights periodicals, all located in the East, regarded coeducation's adoption as a hopeful sign of progress for women's rights. In 1851 the Lily (1849-1856), the first women's rights paper, reprinted a speech that editor Amelia Bloomer sent to be read at the Second Woman's Rights Convention (Akron, Ohio). In a reference to coeducation, Bloomer declared, "Men deprived of female society are inclined to adopt coarse and vicious habits, and women deprived of male society are not thereby improved. Bring the sexes together and mutual benefit results - man is refined - woman is

stimulated and inspired with a higher, nobler ambition. Each sex contributes to elevate and develop the other."[3]

A correlate of her admiration for coeducation was Bloomer's disdain of single sex educational institutions for women, a theme that would recur in succeeding women's rights periodicals. In an article describing a Mount Vernon, New York female seminary Bloomer commented that she wished to see the end of such institutions because "the day of their usefulness has passed, and that the longer they continue in existence the worse it will be for woman." Ending on a more upbeat note, Bloomer praised the coeducational Oberlin and Antioch colleges, calling them "cheering signs of progress" in the education of women.[4]

Paulina Wright Davis, editor of the Una (1853-1855), also promoted the concept of coeducation to her readers. In an editorial declaring her indignation that women were barred from enrolling at most state institutions of higher learning, she vowed, "We shall continue to point to those institutions which debar us from equal rights, until their doors open, and we are asked to enter and share with our brothers, in all that is as essential for us as for him."[5] The paucity of coeducational colleges enraged the usually serene Davis. After noting that only six of the approximately 250 American colleges and universities admitted women, she railed at a society

which "compels one half of the human family to feed intellectually on the crumbs thrown from the over-full master's hand."[6]

Editor Anne McDowell of Philadelphia's Woman's Advocate (1855-1856?) did more than express her anger. She penned an editorial intended to alleviate some of the traditional fears surrounding coeducation. Concluding with a homey example, she assured readers that coeducation was like growing up in a family of brothers and sisters where "each regards the other with true respect for every good quality, and gentle charity for every fault."[7] McDowell expressed no contempt for separate institutions for women's education. In fact she reprinted a highly complimentary article from New York's Life Illustrated detailing the buildings and curriculum of Elmira College, a women's college chartered in 1855. At the reprint's conclusion, McDowell commented expansively that Elmira seemed to be "by far the most perfect institution for the education of the future women of the country that has yet been devised."[8]

Among the four antebellum women's rights periodicals the Sibyl (1856-1864) was the most frequent and outspoken supporter of coeducation, probably because its editor, Lydia Sayer Hasbrouck, had experienced coeducation first hand, unlike her sister editors Bloomer, Davis and McDowell.[9] There was no doubt about where Hasbrouck

stood on the issue of single-sex institutions as she editorialized passionately, "A blight on every institution which tends to destroy the symmetrical development of mind and character."[9]

When the Una's editor declared that the denial of women's entrance into male colleges made "our cheeks crimson and our very fingers tingle with indignation," she undoubtedly spoke for her sister editors.[11] The four women channeled their anger into the production of prose to support and expand coeducation. Often their pro-coeducation articles revealed contempt for all-female institutions, which the outspoken editors regarded as inferior and uninspiring in their efforts to educate women. This theme would become more pronounced in the post Civil War women's rights periodicals when all-female colleges appeared in greater numbers.

The number of universities and colleges willing to enroll women students also increased rapidly in the years following the Civil War. In 1870, 169 of the nation's 582 colleges were coeducational; by 1890, 465 of the nation's 1082 colleges and universities were coeducational.[12] Despite the rise in the number of coeducational colleges and universities, women's entrance into these formerly all-male bastions was not without struggle, as is evident from reading the pages of the women's rights periodicals.

The need to increase the number of coeducational colleges and universities was a frequent message read in the pages of the Revolution (1868-1870), edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and managed by Susan B. Anthony. Published in New York City, the paper was the first women's rights periodical published after the Civil War. Articles offered a myriad of reasons for supporting coeducation. One writer predicted better marriages as the result of educating the sexes together because "no other social relation affords so good an opportunity for knowing each other's tastes and aspirations."[13] After reporting on an 1868 riot following a rowing match between Yale and Harvard students, Elizabeth Cady Stanton used the incident to promote the potentially refining influence of women. In her usual forthright style, she declared, "It is high time that at least half of the students were girls, and half the professors women. Not even the most orthodox churches would be any better than Harvard College, made out of male members alone. Forward, then with the women!"[14]

To vary the usually feminine voices advocating the benefits of coeducation, the Revolution employed prominent male supporters whenever possible. The paper reprinted Professor John Bascom's speech to a 1868 meeting of the American Institute of Instruction. Bascom, a professor at Williams College who became

president of the University of Wisconsin in 1874, was a notable proponent of coeducation and stated:

> The young lady is quicker, more enthusiastic, more intuitive in mental action. She imparts a certain brilliancy and life to the recitation room. She shames the dull indifference of the careless, phlegmatic male mind. Her lively memory and imagination and perception would enter like yeast into the heavy, torpid mass, which compose the middle and lower half of a college-class, arouse the sluggish young men to a better use of their powers, and cause a little light to find its way into their spirits. Intellectually, as well as socially, young men and young women are the complements of each other; and divorced in their training, the one class runs to froth and the other to sediment.[15]

The Revolution kept a close watch on institutions contemplating coeducation. The struggle to coeducate the University of Michigan was a slow campaign detailed extensively in the pages of the Revolution during 1869.[16] Not until January 1870 could the periodical announce that women were able to enroll at the Ann Arbor campus. Magnanimously dismissing Michigan's long standing reluctance to adopt coeducation, the Revolution trumpeted, "Glorious Star of the North! Michigan always was a bright jewel in the coronet of republican liberty."[17]

Additional good news filled the paper throughout 1869. Northwestern University in Illinois, "the leading Methodist institution in the West," adopted coeducation in that year.[18] An alumni committee of Brown University

recommended that women be admitted to their Alma Mater.[19] The paper also announced that at the University of Iowa women were 7% of the junior class, 17% of the sophomore class and 32% of the freshmen class.[20]

Although coeducation was becoming more acceptable and a large number of qualified women were eager to begin their college educations, setbacks were inevitable. In October 1868 the Revolution briefly noted that twenty-three young women had applied to Wabash College (Crawfordville, Indiana) but were rejected for admission because of their sex.[21] In the paper's next issue, one of the twenty-three angrily detailed the situation for the Revolution's readers. After describing the indignities the women endured when they applied, she concluded, "They refuse to educate us, not because the laws of the college forbade, not because our moral characters were such as would contaminate those of the male students, not because we were mentally their inferiors, not because we were incapable of learning, but because God had seen fit, and most unfortunately, to create us women instead of men".[22]

In addition to chronicling the ebbs and flows of coeducation, the Revolution vigorously opposed all-female schools. Outlining the disadvantages of educating women by themselves, Stanton asserted, "It is the isolation of the sexes that breeds all this sickly sentimentality, these romantic reveries, these morbid appetites, the

listlessness and lassitude of our girls. They need the companionship of boys to stimulate them to more active exercise and vigorous thought."[3]

Because Vassar was the most prominent college for women at the time, the Revolution regarded the institution with wary attention. One article detailed the elaborate 1869 commencement activities on the Poughkeepsie campus at which thirty-four young women received Bachelor's degrees. Despite her pleasure at the awarding of the degrees, the Revolution's correspondent wished that the college was coeducational because "Man without woman tends to degeneracy, like oil without alkali becomes rancid and impure - while woman alone, like alkali, inclines to evaporate and crystallize into smaller capacity."[4] Another correspondent reported on her attendance at a Vassar literary society reception. In addition to describing the event, she criticized the college for permitting an overemphasis on dress at the expense of intellectual accomplishments. She declared, "The poor but ambitious girl will not find that college a home to her where every overdressed, brainless doll outranks talent and industry... We want a college to educate women, not pretty toys, and well dressed dolls, but women, who, with large heart and developed brain, will live for their sex and their country."[5]

Although Chicago's Agitator (1869) published for

only nine months, many of its articles focused on coeducation and decried the idea of all-female colleges. Editor Mary Livermore reported that the universities of Michigan and Wisconsin were attempting to establish separate state universities for women only. She contended that separate institutions for women could never be equal as long as women's inferiority to men was assumed. Using arguments based on quality and economics, she stated:

> We do not believe in colleges for women alone, any more than for men alone. It is not easy to obtain the best instruction for female colleges. The inferior position of women in our present civilization - our whole system of government being based on women's assumed inferiority - operates to keep the best educators out of the professional chairs of a woman's college. They will not accept them - or if they do, they leave to go on the faculty of the male colleges at the earliest opportunity. The best and the most of everything is provided for the male college - the female college is left to shirk for itself.[8]

Although the three western women's rights papers, San Francisco's Pioneer (1869-1873), the New Northwest (1871-1887) of Portland, Oregon, and Denver's Queen Bee (1882-1887) supported coeducation, they printed little material on it. The most likely explanation for their lack of attention to the subject was that most western colleges and universities had been coeducational since the 1870s. Assuming that the issue had been resolved satisfactorily in their part of the country, the editors decided it was not a newsworthy topic. Except for some

general statements supporting coeducation, the Woman's Chronicle (1888-1893) of Little Rock, Arkansas, the sole southern paper in this study, had little to say regarding its progress or lack of progress in the South. This was most likely because the region was the most reluctant to adopt coeducation and there was little to say on the subject.

However the Woman's Journal (1870-1933), located in Boston and later in New York, led all the other papers in its reporting on coeducation. Its abundance of stories is not surprising in view of the fact that Lucy Stone, the paper's founder and first editor-in-chief, graduated from Oberlin College, just ten years after the Ohio college granted women their first Bachelor's degrees.

In countless editorials, columns, and articles the Woman's Journal promoted the adoption of coeducation which the paper contended was "the primary step in placing woman in her true position in society."[11] For basic information on institutional adoption of coeducation, the Woman's Journal was a weekly bulletin board. Placed next to announcements of newly coeducational schools were glowing testimonials to women's success at institutions both small and large. A Mount Pleasant, Iowa reader reported that although there were twice as many male students as female at Iowa Wesleyan University, the women were as able as men in

both belles lettres, metaphysics, and laboratory work."[28] In 1871, Moses Coit Tyler, then a Professor at the University of Michigan, visited the offices of the Woman's Journal and his comments on the first year of coeducation at his institution appeared as an article. Tyler noted that in the University's first year of coeducation more than 70 women students were enrolled among the more than 1500 males. The women were permitted to study in all departments, the faculty was satisfied with their initial performance, and he added that the best Greek scholar at the University was a woman."[29] Optimism about the successful spread of coeducation was evident throughout the 1870s. In an August 1876 editorial, editor Lucy Stone called readers attention to the large number of women who graduated from coeducational colleges in June's commencement ceremonies. Stone cheerfully noted, "The questions of higher education for women and coeducation are quietly settling themselves. The tempest that raged beforehand is hushed, and again it is seen that the one thing needed for women, is an open field and fair play."[30]

Hopeful reports about the successful adoption of coeducation did not deter the paper from its role as a watchdog. Once an institution became coeducational it remained under the attentive eye of the Woman's Journal and was not immune to disapproval. In 1874 correspondent

Jane DeForest described her attendance at a recent Oberlin commencement week. She noted that at the dedication of a new campus building, a number of students from the "early days" spoke, but not one was a woman. Also in attendance, was a former student, who told DeForest that once she was informed that she could attend meetings of the college's literary society but could not be a member, she departed to attend Boston University. DeForest concluded wryly, "While Oberlin may justly claim to be one of the pioneers in coeducation, it has always striven to show that it by no means considered the sexes equal."[31]

As was to be expected the Woman's Journal was not enthusiastic about the formation of separate women's colleges during the 1870s. The push was on for coeducation of the sexes, not separate colleges for women. In 1870 Stone firmly stated her opinion on the issue, "Women's educational institutions of whatever pretensions, wherever they exist, whether legal, medical, or collegiate, hold inferior rank to those of men, and always will....We did not believe in colleges for women alone, anymore than for men alone."[32] Julia Ward Howe, an associate editor of the periodical, concurred with Stone's opinion. Although Howe reported that during a visit to Vassar College she was impressed with the neat rooms, the delicious tea, and the "happy, wholesome" four

hundred students, she concluded that she opposed the "dreary separation of those whom God has joined together." She endorsed coeducation, "not a mutilated half world of men or women, but an integrated world of both."[33]

As new women's colleges appeared, the Woman's Journal subjected them to the same criticism that they had directed at Vassar. After reporting that the total cost of construction at Smith College would amount to over $2,000,000 because of its elaborate design, a writer called the women's college an "enormous waste." The article contended that it would be cheaper and better to open Harvard to women, where all that would be needed would be "a few boarding houses and a few additional tutors."[34] Two years later the Woman's Journal deplored the announcement of plans to establish Wellesley College and prophesied that "Sooner or later, I am persuaded, the human race will look upon these separate collegiate institutions as most American travelers now look at the vast monastic establishments of Southern Europe; with respect for the pious motives of their founders, but with wonder that such a mistake should ever have been made."[35]

Despite these blistering sentiments, a new toleration for women's colleges gradually developed, possibly because the paper recognized that women's

colleges were instituting high academic standards. In 1879 Lucy Stone, Mary Livermore, and Antoinette Brown Blackwell,""all advocates of coeducation and suffrage" accepted an invitation to visit Wellesley College, which the article noted, "believes in neither." The three skeptics spent a pleasant day at the college and Stone gleefully described it as a place where "the cooks are men, the professors are women."[36]

The paper's new target was the establishment of separate, or coordinate colleges for women. During the late 1880s a number of male universities and colleges, usually in the East, followed the model of Harvard and established an annex or coordinate college for women. The new institutions were a compromise between coeducation and a separate college for women.[37] Although they served to alleviate the trauma of full coeducation for many tradition-bound male eastern institutions, coordinate colleges infuriated women's rights activists, who saw it a another attempt to give women an inferior education.

In 1887 the Woman's Journal announced the opening of Evelyn College at Princeton University. With the acerbity formerly used to describe women's colleges, the paper opposed Princeton's move and vented its sentiments about coordinate colleges in general. The article declared, "Instead of the costly and clumsy method of

establishing a separate college for young women in the same town, the simpler and better way would have been to open the doors of Princeton to girls....It is safe to say that under the separate system the young men and women will think more about each other in a morbid way, and there will be more attempts at clandestine correspondence and flirtation, than if they met each other every day naturally and simply in the classroom, under the eye of the professors, and without the attraction of forbidden fruit."[16]

Coordinate colleges were just one symptom of the effort to contain both coeducation and educated women. The trend was evident from reading the Woman's Journal during the late 1880s and through the 1890s. One is aware of a simmering hostility toward educated women and women college students. Coeducation had helped to advance women's societal role since the 1850s. Women had become increasingly more visible, articulate, educated, and prepared to assume more prominent positions outside of the sphere of the home. Because of this shift in roles college women were frequently berated for their "overeducation" and "abnormal" public activity in the late 1880s. Society came to view the "new woman" as a threat. To thwart women's progress, a nationwide backlash against educated women was orchestrated in the popular press, schools, professions, and coeducational

colleges and universities.[39] This backlash has been variously termed "the woman peril" or the "fear of feminization." Intended to force women to return to a domestic role, it was especially evident in higher education where it temporarily slowed down the progress of coeducation.

In 1885 the Woman's Journal reported that although Stanford University was coeducational, there were rumors that its men and women students would be educated in separate facilities.[40] By 1889 the paper reported that women were limited to 500 places. The Woman's Journal reprinted an interview with Mrs. Leland Stanford. To explain why she placed a quota on the number of female students, Mrs. Stanford noted that in 1888-1889 women numbered 480 of the college's 1110 students. To avoid the college becoming a "female institution" she remarked that "a line had to be drawn somewhere to prevent the possibility - I should say probability - of the character of the place being changed from what was originally intended."[41] In 1886 twenty-seven male students at Dickinson College (Carlisle, Pennsylvania) refused to compete in an oratory contest because one woman had entered. The Woman's Journal reported that she competed alone and won the gold medal while the males rang the college bell to drown her out.[42] In 1888 Adelbert College (Cleveland, Ohio), coeducational for four years, voted to

no longer admit women students. The Woman's Journal decried that college's move and warned, "The conservative youth whom Adelbert wishes to attract will be attracted, while the wide awake and progressive will go elsewhere."[7]

Clara Bewick Colby, editor of Beatrice, Nebraska's Woman's Tribune (1883-1909) reported many of the same disquieting stories which appeared in the Woman's Journal. Cognizant of the movement to restrict coeducation and limit women's role, Colby, a graduate of coeducational University of Wisconsin, warned, "Women have fought the battle too strenuously for an equal chance to obtain the higher education to let the victory slip from them by inert confidence. It is not for men to decide what women's needs and aptitudes are; it is for them to open the fountains of truth and opportunity and leave women to choose for themselves."[8]

By 1900 the backlash against coeducation was in full force. Articles in the Woman's Journal reported that a number of coeducational institutions were reverting to single sex schools. Colby College (Waterville, Maine) announced that when it began accepting women students its male student enrollment dropped, and consequently it would eliminate its women's department.[9] Later articles noted that both Tufts (Boston) and Wesleyan (Middletown, Connecticut) had

restricted the number of women students."[16] By 1909 the periodical announced that Wesleyan, coeducational since 1872, had voted to return to an all-male institution. The article went on to report that students and faculty had deliberately made college life intolerable for the women students and had even gone so far as to exclude them from class day exercises."[17] A month later the Woman's Journal printed a letter from the president of the Wesleyan Student Body in which he boasted that students had actively opposed coeducation for fifteen years. He declared, "Our action throughout, has been one of passive ignoring. The women in college are not opposed because they are women, but because they are in college."[18]

Although the University of Chicago was not as crude as Wesleyan in its efforts to oust women, it did institute a number of restrictions on them. In 1902 the Woman's Journal reprinted an assessment by the university's President Harper on ten years of coeducation at the school. Declaring himself a supporter of coeducation, Harper noted that not all of the ramifications of coeducation were yet evident. Foreshadowing future events at his institution, he concluded, "Certain limitations have already clearly fixed themselves. It is not deemed proper that men and women should take physical education together in the gym.

It has never been proposed that they should occupy the same halls or dormitories. It is possible that experience will call attention to other limitations."[19] His remarks were more than speculative; six months later the Woman's Journal headlined "Coeducation Half Abolished at Chicago." The accompanying article reported that the university planned to place freshmen and sophomore men and women in separate classes and separate living quarters. The paper commented, "We have refrained from speaking of this matter until we were persuaded that it is a living issue, a pending change of vast significance. This is not a woman's question. The future quality and character of the education provided for boys as well as for girls is here involved." The paper went on to note that the president and the majority of the faculty had voted to abolish coeducation in the freshmen and sophomore classes. The Woman's Journal urged women to write letters of protest.[20]

Coeducation was promoted tirelessly by the Woman's Journal from 1870 to 1910. However, after 1910 references to coeducation virtually disappeared from its pages. Reasons for the diminution of coverage can be only speculative and a combination of factors were undoubtedly the cause. The strongest reason could have been that despite the intense backlash against it, coeducation was a firmly entrenched institution which

could be threatened but never abolished. Another factor was that outright attacks on coeducation subsided after 1910. The Woman's Journal may have decided to expend its energies on more vital issues, realizing that coeducation was shaken but relatively secure. Another reason could be that coeducation's most stalwart supporters on the Woman's Journal staff were dead. Lucy Stone died in 1893, and others from the original staff died soon after her. Their deaths left a considerable vacuum on the paper and within the coeducation movement as well. Younger writers for the Woman's Journal matured during an era when coeducation in colleges and universities was commonplace and did not feel the need to pursue the topic so intently. A final reason could have been that the Woman's Journal was faltering after 1910; it was eventually sold in 1917 and re-emerged as the Woman Citizen. As was evident from its title change, the periodical devoted a great deal of attention to the booming woman suffrage campaign. Although the Woman Citizen maintained an interest in women's higher education efforts, coeducation was not one of its main concerns. Despite its lesser emphasis on coeducation material, during its first five decades the Woman's Journal was the primary source for reliable, topical, nationvide coverage on the coeducation movement in the United States.

Conclusion

From 1837, when Oberlin became the first college to admit women to its regular program, to 1920, coeducation altered the history of American higher education. Within eighty-three years, coeducation expanded from a single institution with four women students to over 354 colleges and universities enrolling more than 96,000 women students in 1920.

Despite the dramatic and fairly quick increase in the number of coeducational institutions and students, the story of coeducation is far from a plodding account of languid acceptance and unswerving advancement. The abundant material on coeducation available in the pages of the women's rights periodicals presents a story rich in color, emotion, and detail. News of coeducation's advances and setbacks evoked praise and outrage from the periodicals which viewed coeducation as a barometer of women's advance to equality in other areas of society.

The women's rights press chronicled the progress of coeducation and the efforts expended on its advancement. The periodicals themselves were important elements in its progress: they served as conveyors of essential information, cheerleaders for institutions which adopted coeducation, and unrelenting critics of those which did not. The periodicals printed a wealth of

material on coeducation. These reports appeared quickly and accurately, often presenting information from many states, thanks to a network of far-flung, eager correspondents. Although coeducation's advances at larger institutions, such as the University of Michigan were reported in copious detail, advances at smaller schools were not neglected.

Schools reluctant to admit women were subjected to fierce disapproval until they capitulated into the ranks of coeducation. News of backsliders, such as those of Stanford and the University of Chicago, were well-publicized, and readers were urged to add their voices to protest the new restrictions on women.

Coeducation's staunchest supporters through both good and bad times were the women's rights periodicals. As in the case of any publication, it is difficult to measure actual readership beyond circulation figures and even less possible to calculate the impact a periodical had on an individual or a movement. Thus, the effect the women's rights periodicals had on the growth of coeducation is incalculable. However, their intense efforts to disseminate accurate, current information on coeducation - information that was available no where else - must have buoyed countless young women as they strove to attain an education that would hasten their equality.

NOTES

1. See Thomas Woody, A History of Women's Education in the United States, 2 vols. (New York: Science Press, 1929; New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 2:224-320; Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History (New York, Knopf, 1968), 314-16, 321-26; Annie Nathan Meyer, Woman's Work in America (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1891), 3-106; Charlotte Williams Conable, Women at Cornell: the Myth of Equal Education (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977); and Dorothy McGuigan, A Dangerous Experiment: 100 Years of Women at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor: Center for Continuing Education of Women, 1970). A comprehensive account of coeducation in American colleges and universities is much needed. Even in the most recent encyclopedias of education, Asa Knowles, ed. The Internationl Encyclopedia of Higher Education (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1977); and Torsten Husen and T. Neville Postlewaite, eds., The International Encycopedia of Education, (New York: Pergamon, 1985), there is no entry under the term "Coeducation", nor any reference to it in the sections on "Women's Education" or on the beginnings of the colleges.

2. Papers used in this study were: Agitator, Chicago, 1869; Lily, Seneca Falls, New York, Mount Vernon, Ohio, and Richmond, Indiana, 1849-1856; New Northwest, Portland, Oregon, 1871-1887; Pioneer, San Francisco, 1869-1873; Queen Bee, Denver, Colorado, 1882-1895; Revolution, New York, 1868-1870; Sibyl Middletown, New York, 1856-1864; Una, Providence, Rhode Island, Boston, 1853-1855; Woman's Advocate Philadelphia, 1855-1856?; Woman's Chronicle, Little Rock, Arkansas, 1888-1893; Woman's Journal, Boston, New York, 1870-1933; and the Woman's Tribune, Beatrice, Nebraska, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Oregon, 1883-1909.

3. Lily, August, 1851, 58.

4. Lily, October 16, 1854, 149.

5. Una, September, 1854, 335.

6. Una, August 15, 1855, 121. In fact, Davis

underestimated the number of coeducational colleges. Although complete accuracy on names and numbers is difficult, a reading of James Monroe Taylor's Before Vassar Opened (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1914) and the appendices of Meyer's Woman's Work in America showed that more than six coeducational colleges existed by 1855 when Davis wrote her article.

7. Woman's Advocate, June 14, 1856.

8. Woman's Advocate, December 8, 1855.

9. See Notable American Women, s.v. "Hasbrouck, Lydia Sayer." Hasbrouck attended the coeducational Hygeio-Therapeutic College, a hydropathic, or water-cure medical college in New York City.

10. Sibyl, December 15, 1856, 89-90.

11. Una, September, 1854, 335.

12. Barbara Solomon, In the Company of Educated Women: a History of Women and Higher Education in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 44.

13. Revolution, April 8, 1868, 211.

14. Revolution, August 6, 1868, 74.

15. Revolution, November 19, 1868, 314.

16. Revolution, March 4, 1869, 137; May 8, 1869, 280.

17. Revolution, January 20, 1870, 42.

18. Revolution, July 22, 1869, 39.

19. Revolution, September 16, 1869, 170. Despite the alumni recommendation of coeducation, Brown did not admit its first women students until 1891. In that year, Brown established the "Woman's College of Brown University", later to be called Pembroke College. For an account of women students at Brown's coordinate college, see Grace Hawk, Pembroke College in Brown University: The First Seventy Five Years 1891 - 1966 (Providence: Brown University Press, 1967).

20. Revolution, January 21, 1869, 35-6.

21. Revolution, October 8, 1868, 221.

22. Revolution, October 15, 1868, 230-31. In 1985, Wabash remains an all- male institution. According to the most recent government statistics, there are 104 all-male colleges and 111 all-female colleges remaining in the U.S. See National Center for Educational Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), 111.

23. Revolution, January 29, 1868, 57.

24. Revolution, July 1, 1869, 412.

25. Revolution, December 23, 1869, 389.

26. Agitator, May 8, 1869, 4.

27. Woman's Journal, July 20, 1872, 229.

28. Woman's Journal, March 19, 1870, 82.

29. Woman's Journal, December 9, 1871, 388.

30. Woman's Journal, August 15, 1876, 252.

31. Woman's Journal, September 19, 1874, 300.

32. Woman's Journal, July 16, 1870, 220.

33. Woman's Journal, February 3, 1872, 36.

34. Woman's Journal, November 30, 1872, 377. For a description of the "elaborate design" of Smith College so vilified by the paper, see Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Alma Mater: Design and Experiences in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth Century Beginnings to the 1930s (New York: Knopf, 1984), 69-81.

35. Woman's Journal, November 28, 1874, 378. For a description of Wellesley College and its early building plans, see Horowitz Alma Mater, 42-55.

36. Woman's Journal, July 5, 1879, 212. For a lively account of the origins and development of Wellesley College and its student body and faculty, see Patricia Palmieri, "In Adamless Eden: A Social Portrait of the Academic Community at Wellesly College, 1875 - 1920" (Ed.D.diss., Harvard University, 1981).

37. See Woody, Women's Education, 2:304-20.

38. Woman's Journal, January 29, 1887, 34. Evelyn College, Princeton's coordinate college lasted for only ten years and graduated only fifteen young women. For information on Princeton's early ventures in educating women see Adelaide Sterling, "Evelyn College," Harper's Bazaar 29 (September, 1896), 806-807; and Patricia Graham, Community and Class in America (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), 194-97.

39. There is a need for more work on the history and analysis of the backlash against women which figured so prominently in women's lives during the 1890s and 1900s. For a brief, but informative discussion of the backlash movement see Peter Filene, Him, Her, Self: Sex Roles in Modern America (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1974), 1-127.

40. Woman's Journal, November 28, 1885, 377.

41. Woman's Journal, June 24, 1899, 194. For an account of Stanford's "five hundred limit" written by the college's registrar see Orin Elliott, Stanford University: the First Twenty-Five Years (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1937), 132-136. In 1904 Stanford graduates agreed to another restriction, a ratio of three males to every female. This ratio remained in effect until 1933. See Solomon, Company of Educated Women, 59.

42. Woman's Journal, July 17, 1886, 225.

43. Woman's Journal, February 4, 1888, 35.

44. Woman's Tribune, September 15, 1905, 72.

45. Woman's Journal, March 30, 1901, 98.

46. Woman's Journal, October 6, 1900, 316.

47. Woman's Journal, March 6, 1909, 38.

48. Woman's Journal, April 10, 1909, 58.

49. Woman's Journal, January 11, 1902, 24.

50. Woman's Journal, June 21, 1902, 196. The University of Chicago's move to segregate women caused a nationwide storm of controversy. In 1902 separate classes for freshmen and sophomore women were instituted, but within five years the policy collapsed because of expense and bureaucracy. The threat to coeducate the University has

been well described by Lynn Gordon in "Coeducation on Two Campuses: Berkeley and Chicago, 1890-1912," in Woman's Being, Woman's Place: Female Identity and Vocation in American History, edited by Mary Kelley (Boston: G.K. Hall & Company, 1979), 180-89; Woody, Women's Education, 2:282-91; Rosalind Rosenberg, Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 44-53; and Solomon, Company of Educated Women, 56-8.